

Book review

Urinary Tract Infection: Current Topics in Infection, No 3. By Rosalind Maskell, 1982. Edward Arnold, London. Pp 144. Price £15.50.

This book should be compulsory reading for all who are concerned in the management of patients with dysuria. The author is both a microbiologist and a clinician working in renal medicine. She is in the ideal position to interpret the language and concepts of the clinic and the laboratory to each other, and she has done so very well. Not all of this book will be of interest to a venereologist. He will probably ignore the chapters on neonatal urinary infections and on urinary tract tuberculosis.

There are, however, two main criticisms that can be made. The first is in the method of referring to the bibliography. The author is meticulous in fully ascribing credit for research in the text of the book. This results in jerky reading. It would have sufficed to enumerate references in the text and for the bibliography to decode the numbers. This would make far easier reading. I was surprised that only the Liverpool work on genitourinary tuberculosis was quoted. For a book that quite clearly sets out to be a definitive monograph Sutherland's work in Glasgow should also have been quoted.

My second criticism is the negative attitude adopted to venereology. In her discussion on sterile pyuria the author states "gonorrhoea and chlamydial infection should be ruled out." When discussing male patients with dysuria and without confirmed bacterial infection she states "gonococcal and chlamydial urethritis should be excluded." These patients are exactly the groups in whom an aggressive and positive search for sexually transmitted pathogens are indicated.

It is essentially a compassionate book. It is not a book about urinary tract infection—it is a book about people with urinary tract infection. It is also practical. Dr Maskell

starts by defining the objectives of management and only then does she decide on the means of achieving them. This problem solving approach is beautifully illustrated in algorithmic type flow charts. I suspect that Dr Maskell designed her flow charts first and then wrote the chapters around them. If the excellent charts and tables alone were read this book could be read in half an hour. After that any clinician's management of dysuria would be vastly improved. Nevertheless, the reader should read the whole text. It will take no longer than a single long distance train journey, and it is a "good read."

This is probably not a book for the private library of individual venereologists but it should be on the shelves of the departmental library of any self respecting department of genitourinary medicine.

Dermot Murray

Venereological Medicine. By R R Willcox and J R Willcox, 1982. Grant McIntyre Ltd, London. Pp 351; 80 illustrations. Price £9.95.

This sturdy paperback is a welcome newcomer to the ever-growing literature on sexually transmitted diseases. It is good to see a new venture from the Willcox family. After all, it is 18 years since the publication of *A Textbook on the Venereal Diseases and Treponematoses*. I think this book will become a best seller for all starting to work in the specialty of genitourinary medicine, especially those who prefer clinical to laboratory work. It will also appeal to the already established venereologist.

There is a good introduction on the epidemiology of sexually transmitted diseases. There is a resumé of current trends into more esoteric byways of the subject, enough to whet the appetite of the curious. This is followed by a useful section on the

management of patients. There are good sections on how to take a history and how to examine the patient. Contact tracing is well described and there are models for how it should be done.

It is pleasant to see the way the various disorders are described. The first section classifies conditions usually associated with genital discharge. This is divided into pathology, gonorrhoea, non-specific genital infections, candidosis, and trichomoniasis. The next section describes conditions associated with genital sores and tumours, and this is divided into diseases caused by spirochaetal organisms, bacteria, chlamydia, ectoparasites, and viruses. Altogether the presentation is neat and well set out in a taxonomic way.

The last chapters of the book are useful and thoughtfully presented. There are sections on non-venereal conditions, treatment, and side effects and descriptions of investigative techniques. Some of the illustrations look dated—especially those on treponemal disease and one of prostatic massage—but all are remarkably well reproduced, considering this is a paperback. Congratulations to the publisher and printer are due on this aspect.

Any venereologist will find the list of approved and proprietary names of drugs covered in the final eight pages of the text invaluable. Most of us have a considerable number of patients who travel abroad, and the list will help if the name of a drug in a foreign country is needed to be known. Finally, Drs R and J Willcox should be praised for their willingness to put into print their teaching on epidemiological treatment of gonorrhoea. There is also wise advice on the need for diplomacy in contact tracing in late syphilis.

The book may not be earth shattering in the scientific aspects of the subject, but it is what good practical venereology is all about.

M Waugh